**NPPO Nepal Declares the INVASION of American Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) in Nepal**

After the first report of invasion of Fall Armyworm (FAW) in Asia in July, 2018, from Karnataka State of India, National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) Nepal was alert on the surveillance, monitoring and detection of the presence of FAW in Nepal. Many surveillance field visits for the detection of the pest were conducted right from the Jhapa (East) all the way to Dang (West). Many suspected samples were collected from the field, reared in the laboratory and sent to National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources (NBAIR), Bangaluru, India for the confirmation by molecular analysis.

The first lot of samples was sent on January 19, 2019 and was identified as the *Spodoptera litura*.

Series of meetings of NPPO, different stakeholders including FAO, CABI, CIMMYT, iDE Nepal, HKI, USAID and officials of Plant Quarantine and Pesticide Management Center (PQPMC) and the Technical Taskforce Team organized by NPPO and high level meetings (Secretary Level) at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD) were conducted regarding the official declaration of the invasion of FAW in Nepal.

After the failure to receive the specimens of FAW claimed to be the FAW from NARC, NPPO sent a technical team to the location based on the geographical coordinates and samples collected from the maize fields. The samples were sent for molecular identification on June 10, 2019 and the results were received on June 29, 2019 and were again identified to be the tobacco caterpillar (*Spodoptera litura*).

The 18th meeting of NPPO Nepal, chaired by Dr. Dilli Ram Sharma held on July 7, 2019 at decided that further verification required at molecular level to declare the invasion of FAW in Nepal and requested CABI to facilitate the same.

Again, based on the decision of the High Level Taskforce at MoALD, chaired by the Secretary decided to form National Technical Working Group in the leadership of the Chief of NPPO and the group was given the responsibility to study the available information, conduct survey, surveillance and collect suspected specimens and send for morphological as well as molecular identification.

Accordingly, a team of technical personnel from MoALD, PQPMC and CIMMYT was mobilized in the fields of Kavrepalanchowk, Sindhupalchowk on …., Chitwan and Nawalpur on July 25, 2019. Samples collected from the field were sent for molecular identification again to NBAIR on 30th of July, 2019. The results were received on 9th of Aug, 2019 and were identified to *Spodoptera frugiperda*.

Thus the 19th Meeting of NPPO Nepal, chaired by Dr Dilli Ram Sharma held on 12th of Aug, 2019 at Plant Quarantine and Pesticide Management Center and declared the Invasion of the FAW in Nepal and decided to communicate the fact with all stakeholders including the IPPC/APPC and other concerned organizations.

